

How should breastmilk look?

- Breastmilk may look thin and watery.
- It may look bluish, yellowish or brownish in color.
- Breastmilk separates into layers when it cools. Shake it gently before feeding your baby.



Collecting and Storing Breastmilk for When You're Away



If you have any questions about breastfeeding, please call:

WIC is an equal opportunity program.
 Developed by the California State WIC Program
 Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor, State of California
 S. Kimberly Belshé, Secretary, Health and Human Services
 Sandra Shewry, Director, Department of Health Services.
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How do I provide breastmilk when I'm away from my baby?

- Plan ahead and store breastmilk for your baby.
- Express your breastmilk ahead of time by hand or with a breast pump (Mornings may be better to express or pump because your breasts are fuller).
- Breastfeed your baby before you leave and when you come back.
- If you will be away for a long time, hand express or use a breast pump.
- Call the WIC office for help and information on pumps.

How do I pump breastmilk?

- Wash your hands before pumping.
- Massage your breasts gently to get your breastmilk flowing.
- Keep a photo of your baby or a piece of baby's clothing with you. Anything that helps you to relax will help you "let down" your breastmilk.
- Pump on the same schedule that your baby breastfeeds.
- Some moms find they get more breastmilk when they breastfeed on one breast and pump on the other at the same time or breastfeed first, then pump the other.
- Be patient. It may take time to find the best routine.



How do I store breastmilk?

- Store breastmilk in clean bottles or milk storage bags.
- Put only 2-3 ounces of breastmilk in each container until you know how much your baby takes at each feeding.
- Write the date and your baby's name on each container.
- Keep your breastmilk in a refrigerator. If there is no refrigerator, store your milk in a cooler with an ice pack until you get home.
- If your baby is in the hospital, ask how your breastmilk should be collected and stored.

Guidelines for Storing Breastmilk*

	Room Temperature (70°F)	Refrigerator	Home Freezer
Fresh hand expressed or pumped breastmilk	4 hours	5-8 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 weeks in a freezer inside a refrigerator• 3-4 months in a freezer with a separate door from the refrigerator• 6+ months in a deep freezer (0°F or less)
Thawed breastmilk	Use within 1 hour after thawing	Use up to 24 hours after thawing	Do not refreeze thawed breast milk

** For babies who are not in the hospital*

What do I do with frozen or cold breastmilk?

- Thaw frozen milk in a refrigerator overnight.
- To warm breastmilk, put it in a bowl of warm water.
- You may feed your baby breastmilk either cool or warm.
- Throw away any breastmilk that your baby doesn't drink.

Remember: Do not thaw or heat breastmilk in the microwave. Microwaves destroy nutrients and can create "hot spots" that burn your baby's mouth.